

Two Day Multi Agency Crime Blitz Focuses on Human Trafficking

New Castle County- A two-day multi-agency operation was conducted earlier this week throughout northern New Castle County which focused on prostitution enforcement, for the purpose addressing the issue of human trafficking.

The initiative, which was a joint partnership comprised of the Delaware State Police, Department of Homeland Security, State of Delaware Attorney General's Office, Department of Probation and Parole, FBI and the State of Delaware Victim Services Unit, took place on Monday, January 22 and Tuesday, January 23, 2018.

Over the course of the two day operation a total of 44 individuals were arrested for prostitution related offenses. There were 29 subjects charged with prostitution and 13 for Patronizing a Prostitute. There were also 20 active warrants cleared, with two being out of state fugitives.

The internet site Backpage.com was utilized as the primary mode of communication for initiating and arranging the eventual face to face meetings, which led to the arrests.

Once in custody all the subjects arrested for prostitution were interviewed by Victim Service specialists for the purpose of gaining possible human trafficking intelligence information but also to provide appropriate resources to include substance abuse counseling, as well as health and social service counseling. It was learned through the course of these interviews that some of the women arrested had come to Delaware for the sole purpose of working as a prostitute, which is indicative of human trafficking. States of residency for these subjects included California, Texas, Nevada,

Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland and New Jersey.

The goal of the operation was not strictly punitive in nature, rather it was an opportunity to identify and offer services to potential victims of human trafficking while at the same time sending a message to the public that prostitution is not a victimless crime. It is a significant quality of life issue that has far reaching effects.

The following subjects were arrested for Prostitution on both nights of the operation: **Amber Robinson**, 33, Visalia, California, **Dawn Skovronski**, 27, Bear.

The following subjects were charged with Patronizing a Prostitute: **Roman Shah**, 31, Baltimore, Maryland, **Enrique Salinas-Salinas**, 32, Wilmington, **Byron Hernandez**, 28, Silver Spring Maryland, **Stephen Whaley**, 44, Clayton, **Howard Gesner**, 54, Newark, **Shaun McCoy**, 45, Bear, **Jeffrey Cordrey**, 32, Wilmington, **Jose Milan-Hernandez**, 36, Newark, **Christopher Cortes**, 26, Newark, **Eugene Chen**, 41, Wilmington.

Additionally, highlighting the serious nature of the human trafficking issue, on Tuesday January, 23, 2018, Governor John Carney signed a proclamation, and the Delaware 149th General Assembly, passed House Concurrent Resolution Number 42, both recognizing the month of January 2018 as "Human Trafficking Awareness Month" in Delaware

For more information regarding the issue of Human Trafficking click on the following links:

<https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign>

<http://www.theiacp.org/humantrafficking>

To report suspected human trafficking:

[1-866-347-2423](tel:1-866-347-2423)

To get help from the National Human Trafficking Hotline:

[1-888-373-7888](tel:1-888-373-7888)

or text [HELP](#) or [INFO](#) to

BeFree (233733)

If you or someone you know is a victim or witness of crime or have lost a loved one to a sudden death and are in need of assistance, the Delaware State Police Victim Services Unit/Delaware Victim Center is available to offer you support and resources 24 hours a day through a toll free hotline 1800 VICTIM-1. (1800 842-8461). You may also email the unit Director at debra.reed@delaware.gov.

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Presented by Public Information Officer, Master Corporal Michael Austin

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